

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

# The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

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## ASSURANCE FOR DOUBTING CHRISTIANS

By the Editor

Many people have been converted, and then have had doubts and fears about their salvation. I had three sad years when I had no courage at all to believe that I was saved. I was not familiar with the Bible. I did not feel like a Christian and did not live like a Christian. I tried to be saved again. How happy I was when, at long last, I found the blessed truth in the Bible that all who have trusted in Christ, the best they knew how, coming to Him with a penitent heart, were saved and had everlasting life.

I think you will be helped, doubting Christians, by a letter written to a young Army Sergeant. In deep distress he wrote to me, telling me of his doubts and fears. I hope that God will assure him and assure many others of their salvation through this message.

"My dear Brother Perkins:

"Your letter of July 11 is before me, and I am glad you wrote. I think I can help you.

"From what you say I understand that you once depended on Christ to save you. That is, you wanted Him to save you, and you turned the matter over to Christ and you thought He did save you. That is what I did also, and if you did that, you are saved.

"There are several things to be said about your state.

"1. First, nearly every Christian has had a period of doubt and fear about salvation. I am sorry to tell you that the first three years after I was converted were sad years. I threw away all hope and tried to get saved again. I did not understand the Bible. I had had no one to show me how I could know I was saved. I knew that I did not live as if I were saved. I knew I did not feel as if I were saved. I had no way to know that I was saved. And at the time I had been converted, I did not have any great emotional experience to impress it on my mind so that I could go by that and know by my remembrance of the experience, that I was saved.

"But one day I found John 5:24 in the Bible, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' I looked it over, and read it again and again. Then I read John 3:18, John 3:36, John 6:47, etc. It seemed almost too good (Continued on page three)

## Samson, the Castaway

By Rev. H. A. Ironside, D.D., Litt.D.

Pastor Moody Memorial Church, Chicago, Ill.

"And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."—Judges 16:18-21.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I Corinthians 9:24.

Truth is always two-sided, that is, there are two ways of looking at every great doctrine presented in the Word of God. Take the question of salvation. It is true that no man can save himself by anything that he can possibly do. He can be saved only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture makes this abundantly clear; and yet it is just as true that if a man does not do something, he will never be saved at all. He must come to the place where he faces his sins and receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Saviour. Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ are inseparable.

Then again, there are many passages in the Bible touching upon that life which we receive from God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ by which we know that it is not of a forfeitable nature. It is eternal life, and therefore when once we are saved, we are saved forevermore. Some people object to this. They tell us that they do not believe in the doctrine of eternal security, and they think that they have valid grounds for refusing it for there are a great many Scriptures that warn believers of the danger of losing their reward, and one of the texts taken today suggests the possibility of becoming a castaway. Some feel that to insist that believers once born again have a life which can never be destroyed is to give license for sin. We have even heard of professed Christians glorying in this doctrine and saying, "I have been saved; at such and such a time I took Christ as my Saviour, and I know I am saved for eternity. It doesn't make any difference now how I live or behave myself. I can never be lost; my soul is

forever secure." Frankly, I have never heard anybody actually say this, but others have told me that they have listened to people speak in this way. I should not be surprised if this were really true, for some folks are always ready to misuse any doctrine of Scripture.

We are warned against those who would turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. I do not question the fact that there is an element of danger in proclaiming the doctrine of eternal security,

precious as it is, to unsaved or unspiritual people. Scripture not only tells us that "he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ," but it also declares, "He that endures unto the end, the same shall be saved"; and it speaks of the danger of becoming a castaway.

### What A Christian May Lose By Sin

While a child of God can never lose eternal life, and no power in



DR. H. A. IRONSIDE

## "IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE"



## News, Comments and Reviews on Sword Literature

By Lola M. Bradshaw, Assistant to the Editor

From your letters I know that **Prayer—Asking and Receiving**, the large 328-page book by Dr. Rice is doing the work. I will quote you parts of several letters.

**Gets New Roof in Answer to Prayer**

"July 6, 1945.

"Dear Mr. Rice:

"It was with interest I read the book **Prayer—Asking and Receiving**; and I want to say that I have found great help in reading it. I have always known that we should take everything to God in prayer, but I did not think it proper or right to ask Him for material things. . . . But when I saw in your book how badly a lady needed a new rug, and prayed for it and got it; I was encouraged, as we needed a new roof on our house. . . . Materials were very hard to get, also carpenters to do the work, so my husband thought it was no use to try for a new roof. . . . But it rained and rained, and almost every night I

was awakened by the solemn drip, drip, drip on the floor. So I decided to pray for the roof, and I started on Monday night telling the Lord how much we needed it. . . . Sure enough, by Saturday night the lumberman came to take the measurements, saying that he was able to get shingles again. Then I had to pray for carpenters and a few weeks they came. With lots of mess and hard work we sure have a nice new roof. Now I know that God wants us to ask for big things."

If you want something from God and have not had faith or courage to pray for it, this book may strengthen your faith, too (or show you hindrances to prayer in your life) so that you can ask and receive from God.

**Surrendered to Preach While Reading, Prayer—Asking and Receiving**

P.F.C. Robert Oughton in the Philippines has received many (Continued on page four)



earth or hell can pluck him out of the hand of Christ and of God the Father, there is a great deal that he may lose. The New Testament particularly tells us of many important things which we may lose, even though already saved, if we are not careful to walk in obedience to the revealed will of God.

We may lose, first of all, our communion with God, our enjoyment of His fellowship; and that is a very serious loss for any Christian. To have trusted in Christ, to have turned at one time from the world and then not to go in fellowship with God is a very solemn thing indeed. When one who has known the Lord becomes cold in heart toward Him and seeks again to enjoy the world from which he was once delivered rather than to find his soul's satisfaction in Christ alone, he is in a very bad way indeed.

Then secondly, we may lose our testimony, and that too is a very serious thing, for we who are saved have been left in the world to bear witness to Christ and to make known to others the saving power of our adorable Lord. The Christian who has failed so sadly as to lose the confidence of the very people to whom he seeks to testify for God is one to be sorely pitied. As an example, think of Lot in Sodom, whom Scripture calls a righteous man. Probably we would never have so reckoned him had not God Himself thus spoken of Him, but note how he lost his testimony by his worldly life. When judgment was about to come upon Sodom and, sent by the angels, he went forth at night to urge his daughters and his sons-in-law to escape from the city which was to be destroyed on the morrow, we are told that "he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law." To them he appeared to be an insane man. The reason was they had never before seen him so desperately in earnest. They had never known him to be so fervent as he was that night. They could not believe that what he told them was true. They thought there was something queer about him, that he was wrong in the head, that he had been deluded, because for the first time since they had known him, he was so dead in earnest. You see, he had had no testimony for so long, it was no wonder they thought it strange that he should be so aroused at last. And they refused to accept his warning, and died when the people of Sodom were destroyed.

A child of God who has lost his testimony becomes a hindrance instead of a help. Sinners will look at him and say, "If that is Christianity, then I don't think much of it."

And then, in the third place, it is possible to lose rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." It is most serious for a believer to contemplate being saved "but so as by fire"; yet Scripture does depict that very thing. If a believer's work turns out to be "wood, hay, stubble," it "shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every

man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (1 Cor. 3:14, 15). But what a solemn thing! How solemn to consider going into the Lord's presence empty-handed?

We sing that song "Must I Go a n d Empty-Handed?" The man who used those words was one who had lived all of his life for the world and finally, when he lay on his death bed, a relative of mine, as I learned some years ago, went to him and pointed him to the Saviour. It was my father's own brother who told the dying man of Christ and led him to trust Him. The result was that great joy came to his heart. But a few days later my uncle went again to see him, and found him greatly troubled in soul instead of rejoicing. "What is the matter?" he asked. "Are you afraid you are not saved? Are you afraid to die and to meet God?" "Oh no," he replied, "It is not that, but I have been thinking of how I have wasted my life and now I have no opportunity of doing anything for the One who has saved me. I shall have to go into His presence empty-handed." It was upon this incident that the song was written:

"Must I go, and empty-handed;  
Must I meet my Saviour so?  
Not one soul with which to greet Him!

Must I empty-handed go?" I believe God put it into the poet's heart to write that song and that at the judgment sea of Christ there will be many believers who will say, "Those words so stirred my soul that I determined that I at least would not appear before my Lord empty-handed." And I feel sure that that man who died so distressed because he thought he had no opportunity of doing anything for Christ will be richly rewarded in that day when he finds out how many have been helped and blessed through his dying words thus put into song and carried 'round the world.

I used to think that the thief who was saved on the cross would not have any reward for service because he was saved at the last moment and there seemed to be no opportunity to do anything for Christ, but I have changed my mind completely about that. I feel certain now that he will have a very rich reward, and I believe that I have had the privilege of helping to procure it for him. Every little while I, as do thousands of other ministers, preach on the dying thief's confession, and I believe that every time I, or any other preacher, tell that story and a poor sinner comes to the Lord, He will remember that, and at the judgment seat of Christ our blessed Saviour will turn to that erstwhile thief and say to him, "I am going to give you part of the reward for the salvation of that soul. It will be divided between you and the preacher who told the story."

Scripture speaks of the possibility of being "saved, but so as by fire," and the man who will thus be saved is the one who has lost his communion with God, has given himself to fleshly indulgence or worldly behavior, thus forfeiting the confidence even of the world outside, and will have to go into the presence of the Lord really empty-handed, saved himself, but all his works burned up.

### What it Means to Be a Castaway

But now, what does Paul mean in our text when he speaks of the possibility of being a castaway? I think we have an answer in the story of Samson which I want you to consider with me for a little while.

Samson was the child of godly parents, and his parents received him as a special gift from God, as an answer to prayer. The name "Samson" means "sunshine" or "sunlight." Have you ever seen a bright, happy child whom they called "Sunshine"? Samson means just that. When Manoah and his wife received this little lad from the Lord, they said, "This is the sunshine of our home," and they gave him that name. But little "Sunshine" grew up and, though mightily used of God for a time, ended with blinded eyes. This Sunshine, who brought such joy into that home, failed, and failed terribly because he did not do what Paul says he had to do—keep his body under.

Paul means here our literal, physical bodies. He says, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest I should, after all my work, after all my labors, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He was not speaking about being sent to hell or being put out of the family of God, but about the servant of God who cannot be used any more because he has failed so terribly, and will come to the judgment seat of Christ without any reward. Paul says he does not want to be caught that way.

If Samson in his day had only remained to the last the simple, dependent man of God that he was in the beginning, what a different story we would have to tell concerning his last days! He was called by the Spirit of God to deliver Israel. He was a man of faith; there is no question about that. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we are distinctly told that he was man of faith. In verse 32 we read: "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets." He is one of the heroes of the ages, those mighty witnesses to the power of faith.

His early days give us an idea of what he might have been if he had only remained the devoted man he was in his youth. But the day came when Samson failed God. In failing God, he failed Israel; and he himself eventually became a "castaway." You know his failure. I don't need to go

over the story afresh and tell of the foolish marriage of Samson to the Philistine woman, absolutely contrary to the Word of God. God had commanded His people to make no marriages with the pagan people around them. But Samson said to his parents, "I have found a woman down in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife." See where the trouble was? He was going to please himself, whether it pleased God or not. How many other men of God have failed in the same way! How many a young man or woman has failed in exactly the same way! Many say, "Well, I am going to do as I want to, whether it pleases God or not." What a terrible blunder! What a fatal mistake! How many young Christians have gone that way today! How many have made their plans without reference to the Word of God! Hundreds and thousands of Christians over the world seem to ignore the fact that it is impossible for a child of Light and a child of darkness to have real fellowship together, and after the first fancy has passed away, they face being linked together for life—a child of God and a child of the Devil. An old Puritan once said, "If you are a child of God and you marry a child of the Devil, you can expect to have trouble with your father-in-law." It always works out that way. Yet, hardly a week goes by but we see some young Christian entering into such a relationship.

That was Samson's first blunder, but he lost his first wife. His father-in-law gave her away to another man. Samson should have realized that God had intervened. Samson was a Nazirite. A Nazirite was an Israelite who devoted himself to God in a peculiar way. All the Israelites belonged to God, but if one of them wished to dedicate himself to God in a special manner, he took the vow of the Nazirite. That meant that during the period of his Naziritiship he was devoted to God in more than an ordinary way. During that time he could not eat anything that came from the vine; that is, he could not partake of the joys of this world. He was not to go near the dead, not even in the case of his father or mother, for by sin came death. As an outward sign of his vow he was to let his hair grow long, and not to cut it.

Samson was a Nazirite to God from his birth. And yet, this God-separated man violated the Word of God, and we find him going into the depths of sin. In the first instance his relation with the Philistine woman was outwardly sanctioned by at least a form of marriage; but in the second instance it is an utterly evil relation. You would think now that he would come to his senses and say, "I am going to God, to confess and judge my sin and to get right." But no, it is not long until he falls in the same way again and again. We talk about sinful habits. No one ever fell into sinful habits who did not start that way.

So Samson went on in sin, and at last came the entanglement with Delilah, a heartless woman whose only thought was to get all the money she could out of him, even to selling him into the hands of the Philistines to be put to death. The poor fellow no doubt thought he loved her, and that she loved him. But Delilah is determined to betray him into the hands of the Philistines, so now she says, "I will try to find out for you the secret of his strength, and, if I can, I will get him to tell me by what means he may be deprived of it." When Samson comes to see her, she puts on her nicest behavior. I can imagine Samson saying to her, "Do you love me," and she replies, "Oh, I admire you so! Samson, tell me why you are so much stronger than other men? Will you tell me the secret of your great strength?" Samson should have sprung up immediately and left her, saying to himself, "I am on dangerous ground. I can never betray the secret of God to this woman." But instead of that, he listens to her, and finally says, "If they were to bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man." So she waited till he slept. Then she went and got the withs, probably willows, and bound him with them. She had her Philistine friends waiting in the next room, and just as he began to awaken, she called, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee!" Springing to his feet, he sapped the withs asunder, and the Philistines did not dare come out to take him.

But Delilah would not give up, and on another day she approaches him and says, "Samson, you mocked me. You didn't tell me the truth. Tell me, where does your strength lie?" And Samson again listens to her, and finally says, "Take new ropes that never have been used and bind me with them, and I will lose my power." And again she got him to sleep and tied him with the cords. Again she called, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee!" Samson sprang to his feet, and snapped the cords asunder.

A third time he came to her, and I think I can just see her speaking to him: "Samson, hitherto thou hast mocked me and told me lies. Tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound." He looked up, and seeing a weaver's beam nearby, answered her, "If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web." Do you see now? He is getting dangerously near the secret of the Lord when speaking of that long Nazirite hair, that mark of separation to God. Again she gets him to sleep, and taking those seven locks of hair, she fastens them to the weaver's beam. Then she calls for the third time, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee!" He leaps to his feet and goes out, not realizing that he is dragging the beam behind him.

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### THE SWORD OF THE LORD

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In verse fifteen we see how, day after day, she nags him. Every time he says to her, "Delilah, you have such beautiful eyes," she replies, "Yes, but tell me where your great strength lies?" Every time he gives her a compliment, she keeps at it, until the poor man is worn out and in despair he says, "Well, I might just as well tell her." In verse seventeen we read: "Then he told her all his heart and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

Think of a confession like that in her house! Think of a man whose conscience is so dead that under such circumstances he would dare to say, "I am a Nazarite." It is the very thing that Paul says he would never do. Samson had given himself up to the lusts of the flesh, and yet dared to say, "I have been a Nazarite unto God."

After Delilah saw that she at last had the secret, she makes him sleep again. So we see him, sleeping on the knees of Delilah, just as many a child of God is sleeping on the knees of the world. After he is asleep, she calls a barber and commands him to cut off the seven locks of hair. Samson does not know what is transpiring; he is so sound asleep. Then she calls him for the fourth time. He springs to his feet, and he does not even miss the Nazarite hair. "He wist not that the Lord was departed from him." What does it mean? It means that he is a "castaway."

Oh, my brother, my sister! What a terrible thing to be said of a Christian—that the Lord has departed! Not that the Spirit of God leaves him, or that Christ gives him up, but that so far as God can see him, his testimony is gone. God says, "I can no longer work through him. I will have to give him up."

So Samson rose up and went out to shake himself as before, but before he was hardly aware of them, he found himself helpless in the hands of his enemies, and he was a captive. "And the Philistines took him and put out his eyes." That always happens when a man gets away from God; he loses his sight. I have known men who at one time were mightily used of God, and then sin came into their lives, sin they did not confess to God, and finally He

said, "I can no longer use you." The Spirit of God gave them up, and they became "castaways." Now when I meet them, they will say, "Well, I don't see things as I used to see them." The Philistines have put out their eyes. There are children of God who are useless to him because their eyes are out.

Then what happened? Samson became a slave of the Philistines. "They bound him with fetters of brass." Where can you get a better picture of the castaway than that? God has given him up, the Philistines have taken him, his sight is gone, his power is gone, and he is grinding in the prison house. I have seen lots of back-sliders like that—once happy with the Lord and once mightily used of God, now grinding in the prison house of the enemies of God.

### But God Can Cleanse and Restore to Fellowship and Service the "Castaway" Christian

What a pitiable thing if this were the end, but this is not the last we hear of Sampson. Read the next verse. "Howbeit, the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven." And as that long Nazarite hair of his began to come out afresh, Samson must have gone before God in deep sorrow and repentance.

And then came the day when the Philistines were to celebrate, and they came to the temple of Dagon, after sending word up and down the land; came with great rejoicing to celebrate the victory of Dagon over Jehovah. It was a victory which God Himself had permitted because of Samson's failure to keep his body under. So they came to the temple, a great crowd on the floor and some in the upper gallery; and there was the image of Dagon, and the priests of Dagon—all of the people rejoicing to think that their god had more power than Jehovah, the God of the Jews. By doing that, they had taken the matter out of the hands of Samson, and made it a matter to be settled between God and Dagon. Now God takes up this poor, frail servant, and in answer to his petition permits him to act for Him. Imagine Samson on that day.

What must have been his thought? I feel that he must have said to himself, "I have brought this dishonor to the God of Israel by my own wretched failure."

In verse 25 we read, "And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars." Then Samson lifted up his heart to God, and back of that prayer there must have been bitter confession and repentance. "And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." He was appointed by God to destroy the Philistine enemies of God, and now he calls out for one more opportunity to do what he should have done before. As the services are going on, and the Philistines are rejoicing, Samson rests between the pillars and takes one pillar with one arm and one with the other. Suddenly, those near him notice that he seems to tighten his grasp on the pillars. Then he bows his shoulders and draws the pillars together; and in a little while all that is heard are the cries of the enemies of God and the rending of the walls as the building crashing down. "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." A castaway? Yes, but now in mercy restored, and still used for the blessing of his people.

In this day, we wrestle not with flesh and blood; our enemies are not the Philistines. We wrestle with wicked spirits in heavenly places. And how we need to keep right with God so that our spiritual strength may continue to flow in us, that God may use us mightily. If any of us see in Samson the man we might be, let us come to the place of confession, repentance, and selfjudgment. For God says in I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Look to God to make you clean and then to use you.

## ASSURANCE FOR DOUBTING CHRISTIANS

(Continued from page one)

to be true that the moment I had depended on Christ, He had given me everlasting life; no matter how I had felt when I was saved, no matter how I felt now, I had everlasting life! It was a wonderful time when God helped me to understand and believe that Scripture, and take it at face value. From that day to this, I have not doubted my salvation.

"Second, it is no evidence that

you are not saved, if you are not living a victorious life. I am sorry that you have not lived a victorious, triumphant life. However, let me tell you this; that I had the same experience, again and again. So have many of the very best Christians I know. I know that is true about some of the best preachers in America. They had a long season in which they did not have daily victory. They were up and down, sometimes happy, sometimes sad. You will find that that is a part of the Christian life, in many, many cases.

"But even in this matter there is good evidence that you have been saved. For one thing, you are sorry for your sins. You hate your sins, and I can tell that by the way you write about them. The fact that you are discouraged and downhearted about your failures and sins shows that in your heart you love the Lord Jesus and want to please Him. Only Christians, not lost sinners, feel so.

"Do not confuse salvation and victory. They are two separate matters. You get salvation just

one time when you give yourself to Jesus Christ, accepting Him as Saviour and trusting Him to forgive you. But then, victory is a different matter, which one must have day by day. Each day we are taught to confess our sins to God and have forgiveness. Remember the Lord's Prayer tells us we are to say, 'And forgive us our sins' (Luke 11:4). And I John 1:9 says, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' So you see, every day you should come to Christ with your sins and failures, confess them to Him, and then you must believe that they are forgiven, because that is His plain word, and Jesus is a gentleman who never broke a promise. You can absolutely rely upon what He says in the Bible.

"Fourth, here are certain ways you can know that you are saved.

"1. There is Matthew 10:32 which says, 'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven.' According to that plain word, if you have claimed Jesus as your Saviour, honestly, then He has claimed you, and you are saved. You can rely upon that. You see, there is not any certain way you have to feel, but if you wanted to be saved, and were willing to claim Christ as your Saviour, He was willing to claim you as God's child. Isn't that simple and blessed?

"2. Jesus said in John 6:37, 'All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' If you came to Christ, it was because the Father gave you to Him, and put it in your heart to come. The very fact that you want to be saved is evidence that God wants you saved, and has led you to come to Christ. And then here is a blessed, blessed promise: 'And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' Never mind how you felt when you came; never mind whether you understood all about it in your head. Never mind whether you have always been true to your vows. None of us has always been true. But did you come to Christ? In your heart, the best you knew how, did you come to Him? Well, did you mean to come? If you did come, then He has never turned you down. And God is here talking about the heart, the will, the intention. If you wanted to come, decided to come, tried to come, then you did come. And Jesus received you and did not turn you down. He did not cast you out and He never will.

"You wonder whether you had believed in Christ or believed on Christ. Actually, both terms are used in the Bible. If you have depended on Him, then you have believed in Him in the way the Bible commands us to believe. If you risked Him, like you deposit your money in a bank and risk the bank, then He saved you. If you committed your case to Him like you would commit a case of sickness to the doctor, then Jesus

saved you. If you came, in your heart and intentions, then God has received you and Christ did not reject you.

"3. There is a precious promise in I John 3:14. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.' If you love Christian people, and want to be a good Christian, that is a sign that already you have passed from death to life. God put the love of Christians in your heart. It was the same thing that happened when He made you hate sin, as I can tell that you do. So you have this Bible evidence that you were saved, if you love other Christians, enjoy their fellowship, want to be like good Christians.

"Let us consider this matter from the viewpoint of the many promises in the Bible. The Bible clearly teaches that God wants you saved, that Christ died for you, and there are many, many invitations to come and be saved. These invitations ought to be taken at face value. God wants to save you. There is not a single case in the Bible of a man who wanted to be saved and couldn't be saved.

"Then, consider your own heart. You want to be saved. You are concerned about it, troubled about it. You have studied the Bible and prayed. Your heart longs to know that your sins are forgiven. Now, doesn't it seem strange that a Saviour who wants to save people, and a poor sinner who wants to be saved, cannot get together? That does not sound sensible, and it is not sensible. If you wanted to be saved and asked Jesus to save you, then you may be sure that He did.

"Quit wondering about your faith. The very fact that you once took Jesus, the best you knew, was evidence of faith in your heart. And the coming itself is faith. The confession of Christ before men is faith. Your heart's longing for salvation shows that you believe there is a Saviour who can save and you want Him to save you. You have all the evidences that your heart is seeking what God wants to give you, yea, that you have already come, the best you know, to believe on Him.

"Throw away your doubts and fears. The devil has bothered a million Christians with the same kind of doubts and fears. But God loves you, and He wants you to believe that He loves you and that He has already forgiven you as soon as you asked Him to do it and trusted Him.

"Let me hear from you again, please, and if I can help you, I will be so glad to do so.

"In Jesus' name, yours,  
(signed) "John R. Rice."

JRR:gjr

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## NEWS, COMMENTS

(Continued from page one)

blessings through this book, and he has written a letter addressed to Sword of the Lord readers. He says in part:

"Dear Fellow readers of the Sword of the Lord paper:

"I thank and praise God every day for His Holy Word, and for His publishing company, The Sword Publishing Company. But right now I want you to rejoice with me and praise God and give Him all the glory for Dr. Rice and his book called *Prayer—Asking and Receiving*. . . . While reading the book I was deeply moved by the Spirit and surrendered my heart and life to God to be an evangelist. . . . The next month, June, 1944, Uncle Sam called me into the service.

"In the period of four months preaching with other Christians at street meetings, jail services, missions, hospitals, God blessed with about 60 souls for His Kingdom in six sermons.

"It was in Dr. Rice's book *Prayer* that God taught me how to pray for 'bread,' Holy Spirit for lost souls.

"The first time that I prayed like Dr. Rice teaches us, God met with one lost soul.

"As the months went by the number of souls increased as my faith and knowledge increased. Four months later 35 young boys were deeply moved by God's spirit and came forward repenting and claiming Christ as Lord and Saviour in one invitation. My Christian friend, Sgt. Grant Macomber of Red Oak, Illinois, and I held this service at the Texas State Reformatory for wayward boys. We had no song books, no sermon notes, or sermon prepared. We hadn't been to college or Bible school, but we had been to Calvary.

"Grant and I prayed for 'Bread' for these lost and condemned sinners as God teaches in His word and in Dr. Rice's book *Prayer*.

"Besides answering prayers for the Holy Spirit, God has blessed my heart and increased my faith by answering many other things for me as for Christian workers and for money on many occasions. I have prayed for rain and it came down in bursts; on another occasion I prayed for the rain to stop and the clouds rolled back and the sun came shining through. A prayer answering God!

"Just a few days ago I prayed for money to send to the Sword of the Lord Publishers for God's messages, to get to young converts and Christian workers and to lost souls. In two days God answered by sending a check for \$22.32, and I had asked no one for the money. Before sending it to the Sword Publishing Company I will 'flash it around so the doubting Thomases' can see that God answers Prayer. He is truly as powerful today as He was in Old Testament times and during the days of Pentecost.

"All these blessings because God inspired His servant Dr. Rice to relay His message in the book called *Prayer—Asking and Receiving*."

Then he urges you, readers of The Sword of the Lord to get this book and read it prayerfully. We say, 'Amen,' not because we will receive \$1.50 for the book, but because of what the book will do for you. (It is priced so low that there is no 'profit' in the book at \$1.50).

**Woman Learns to 'Pray Without Ceasing'**

Well, here is another letter from a lady in Clarendia, Iowa, who says she learned to enjoy praying, and has learned the meaning of 'Pray without ceasing' since reading *Prayer—Asking and Receiving*. She also stated that her pastor is using the book in his daily family worship.

That is what you readers say about the book, that is not what we, the publishers, say. Of course we know it is good, too. It blessed my heart as I read it first as articles in *The Sword of the Lord*, then when I read proof on it after

it was set in type for the book, and later in the finished book. I do not see how anyone can read it without being compelled to pray. It works!

**\$58,000 Church Debt Liquidated**

When Dr. Rice was in revival services in Georgia recently, the pastor told him how he got courage to pray for the liquidation of a debt of about \$58,000 on the church by reading the chapter in this book on "Big Prayers to an Almighty God."

What has the Lord done for you through this book? Don't you want to write and tell us?

**Bible Facts About Heaven**

Mrs. Rice has been specially interested in a number of letters that have come to us about the 64-page pamphlet, *Bible Facts About Heaven*, and she has written the following report for you on that pamphlet:

**The Comfort of God to Those Who Have Lost Loved Ones**

Where is there a home which has not been touched by sorrow in these stressful days—but, bless the Lord He has given comfort to many who have suffered the loss of loved ones. Many have written this year to say how the little book *Bible Facts About Heaven* by Mr. Rice has shown them the blessing the Lord has prepared for them "in His Father's house." Let these letters tell their own story.

"On January 1st this year my dear little girl went to Heaven to live. . . . I got more comfort from your book *Heaven* than from the hundred fifty messages we received or the fifty "flower designs."

Another broken-hearted mother writes:

"I have read and studied your fine book on *Heaven*. I want you to know that it has been such a comfort to me. It is the most wonderful message I have ever read and I only wish it could be placed in the hands of every one."

"We had a terrible tragedy in our home March 21st while in Abilene, Texas. My baby who was twenty-one months was killed by a neighbor's car which backed

over him. . . . That is why I especially enjoyed your book because I want to see my 'Pete' again and now I know I will because I have that faith that I have always had but which is now stronger than ever."

A Christian friend sent the booklet on *Heaven* to a bereaved family. She sent us the letter she had received from the grief-stricken mother. "I do want to thank you sincerely for your thoughtfulness and kindness in sending us the little book which I received in the mail this morning, also for the very nice little note enclosed. It is so comforting to know that somebody shares your grief to such an extent that she takes the time and trouble to try to help you bear it."

"I must say that I have already been comforted in just the little bit I have been able to read this afternoon. As I read the index in the front of the book I noticed the chapter entitled, "Will Christians Know Each Other in Heaven." This is a question I have been asking myself ever since our dear son was taken from us. Will we know each other when we meet again?—And that certainly provided in one chapter all the reassurance that I needed."

Think how heart-broken a mother would be over losing one baby. This young mother lost three. But she found the Lord and He has comforted her.

"Several weeks ago on March 5th I had a set of triplets, two girls and a boy. Since they were premature babies, all three died. The Rescue Mission sent me one of your booklets, *Bible Facts About Heaven*. I am now 22 years of age. . . . I've never in all these years felt so close to our Heavenly Father as I do now since my husband and I lost our darlings and since I've read your booklet. Sometimes God has to take away one or more of our loved ones so that we may see clearly the road and way of life he wants us to follow. And that way of life I can clearly see and understand now. Just the thought of seeing my babies again makes me want more than ever to live the kind of life Jesus wants me to live."

Another wrote: "I feel as if I must write and thank you for the wonderful help your little book, *Bible Facts About Heaven* gave to me."

"I lost my dear husband on April 17, and have been so depressed since. Nothing helped me until my brother gave me your book. It explained things so clearly."

This booklet sells for only 25 cents, 5 for \$1.00. Get a number to have on hand to give to the sick, the old, the bereaved. Be a book-missionary. Bring comfort and blessing to many.

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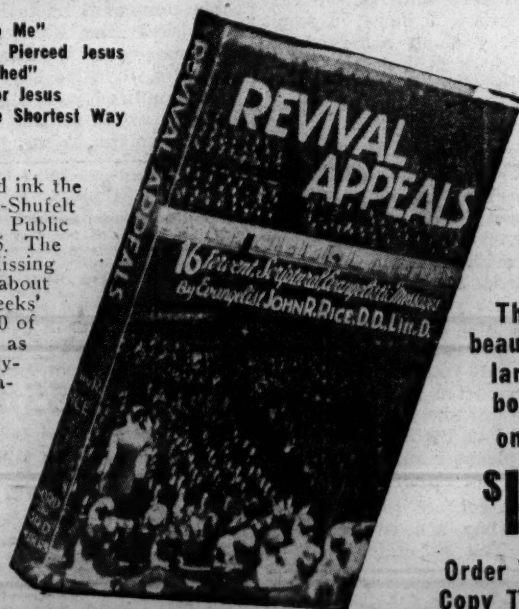
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